

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

PETE WILSON, Governor

## CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

## COLORADO RIVER BASIN • REGION 7

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46561

## FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL MEMO

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TO: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

SENDER'S DIRECT TELEPHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING TRANSMITTAL MEMO): \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

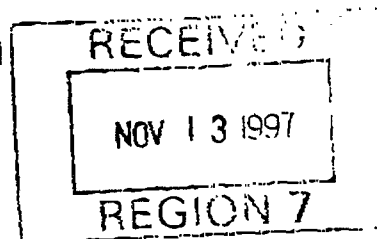
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
SOUTHWEST DIVISION  
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND  
1220 PACIFIC HIGHWAY  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92132-5190

5090.3  
Ser 552.MG/336  
November 12, 1997

Ms. Joan Stormo  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Colorado River Basin Region 7  
73-720 Fred Waring Dr. Suite 100  
Palm Desert, CA 92260



Dear Ms. Stormo:

A request was made by your office concerning the potential use of perchloric acid or other chemicals that may result in perchlorate contamination at or near the Naval Air Facility, El Centro. The Navy believes that the use of ordnance containing materials that cause perchlorate contamination have been tightly controlled due to the extreme hazard in working with ordnance. Therefore, the use and storage of material that have the potential to cause perchlorate contamination at the Naval Air Facility, El Centro have little potential to effect the waters of the State of California. An investigation was made by our staff to determine the potential use and the potential impacts to human health and the environment. With the available information on the uses of chemicals that may result in perchlorate contamination, it is our assessment the only two activities at the facility could potentially be associated. The two activities are the use of a jet assisted take off (JATO) system and the weapons operations. An explanation of the activities associated with both the JATO system and weapons operations are detailed below.

The JATO system was discussed with personnel from the Blue Angels Squadron and personnel at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head, Maryland. The process includes the shipping of a processed JATO canister which may include the perchloric acid. The equipment arrives ready to be strapped to the aircraft. No material loading or other activity is required. The system is treated in the same manner as ordnance due to the potential health risks. The contents of the JATO canisters are utilized during aircraft take off and the canisters are inspected after landing to assure to complete use of the material. The JATO is used approximately 6 times each year between February and March in preparation of the Blue Angels air show.

According to the Naval Air Facility, El Centro's Weapons Officer and Hazardous Material/Waste department there is no current or past evidence indicating the manufacturing of weapons at the facility. All ordnance, including motors, are delivered boxed as a functional unit not requiring any modification.

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The ordnance motor is then transferred into one of the facilities' magazines for storage, and assembled prior to being loaded onto aircraft. The material inside the ordnance motor is sealed with a rubber material preventing leakage and is never stored in open areas. Any material that is not utilized for its intended use is transported and disposed of by the explosive ordnance demolition team out of Yuma.

The Navy appreciates your efforts in the resolution of this matter. If you have any questions or concerns about these issues, please contact the undersigned at (619) 532-3178.

  
MICHAEL GONZALES  
By direction